

THE DUAL IMPACT OF ROMANIAN MIGRATION TO ITALY: ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT: *This study examines the economic and social dimensions of Romanian migration to Italy, one of the most significant intra-European mobility flows since Romania's accession to the European Union. Drawing on statistical data from ISTAT, Eurostat, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the National Bank of Romania, the paper analyzes the dual impact of migration—its economic contributions to the Italian labor market and public finances, and its social implications for migrants' integration and well-being.*

Economically, Romanian migrants play a vital role in sustaining Italy's productivity, particularly in labor-intensive sectors such as construction, agriculture, and care services. Their contributions to taxation and social security, estimated at €4 billion in 2024, underscore their importance to the Italian welfare system. Simultaneously, remittances from Italy—exceeding €3 billion annually—have become a key source of economic stability and local development in Romania.

Socially, the paper highlights persistent integration challenges, including language barriers, cultural adaptation, and experiences of discrimination that affect migrants' participation in host communities. While national and local policies have introduced linguistic, vocational, and legal support programs, their impact remains uneven across regions and social groups.

The findings reveal that Romanian migration to Italy has evolved from temporary labor mobility to a stable transnational system that fosters mutual economic interdependence within the European Union. However, sustainable integration requires policies that balance economic benefits with social inclusion, ensuring that migration remains a catalyst for both growth and cohesion in the European context.

Keywords: *Romanian Migration; Italy; Economic Benefits; Social Integration; Remittances; Labor Market; European Migration*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Migration represents a multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon that intertwines economic, social, and cultural dimensions, profoundly influencing both sending and receiving countries [1]. Within the European Union, Romanian migration to Italy constitutes one of the most significant and sustained intra-EU mobility flows [2]. This process has reshaped labor markets, affected household income structures, and challenged existing models of social cohesion and integration.

From an economic standpoint, Romanian migrants have contributed substantially to the Italian economy by filling labor shortages in sectors such as agriculture, construction, healthcare, and domestic services [3,4]. The remittances they send home have become an essential component of Romania's economic stability, fostering household consumption, reducing poverty, and stimulating regional development [1,6].

At the same time, migration entails important social implications. Many Romanian migrants face difficulties related to integration, social acceptance, and identity adaptation, often encountering barriers such as discrimination, language challenges, and limited access to public services [3,7]. These experiences influence not only the migrants themselves but also the host communities, which must adapt to increased cultural diversity and the changing dynamics of social interaction.

This paper therefore seeks to analyze the dual impact of Romanian migration to Italy, exploring both the economic advantages generated by labor market participation and remittance flows, and the social integration challenges that arise in the process. By combining these two perspectives, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how migration contributes to economic growth while simultaneously reshaping patterns of social cohesion within the European context [7,8].

2. MIGRATION TRENDS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Since Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007, migration to Italy has grown steadily, transforming into one of the most significant patterns of intra-European mobility [2,3]. The lifting of labor restrictions and the consolidation of freedom of movement within the EU facilitated the large-scale relocation of Romanian citizens in search of better employment opportunities and improved living standards. Over time, Romanian nationals have become the largest foreign population residing in Italy, shaping both the demographic composition and the labor dynamics of the host country [4].

Employment among Romanian migrants is predominantly concentrated in labor-intensive and low-skilled sectors such as construction, domestic and care services, agriculture, and manufacturing [3,4]. These fields are often characterized by precarious working conditions, limited job security, and relatively low wages, yet they remain essential to the functioning of the Italian economy, particularly in regions facing labor shortages [5]. Romanian workers have thus filled critical gaps in sectors that are less attractive to local labor forces, contributing significantly to Italy's economic productivity and the sustainability of its welfare system [5,7].

Beyond their economic role, Romanian migrants have also influenced the social and cultural dimensions of Italian society. Their presence has contributed to the diversification of local communities, fostering transnational networks and new cultural interactions, while also highlighting challenges related to integration, social mobility, and recognition [7,8]. The increasing visibility of Romanian communities across Italy reflects not only economic interdependence within the European Union but also broader processes of European integration and identity negotiation that accompany contemporary migration flows [2,3].

Table 1: Romanian Migrants in Italy (2015-2024)

| Year | Number of Romanian Migrants | Annual Growth (%) |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 2015 | 1,100,000 | 3.2 |
| 2016 | 1,120,000 | 1.8 |
| 2017 | 1,150,000 | 2.7 |
| 2018 | 1,180,000 | 2.6 |
| 2019 | 1,210,000 | 2.5 |
| 2020 | 1,200,000 | -0.8 |
| 2021 | 1,220,000 | 1.7 |
| 2022 | 1,250,000 | 2.5 |
| 2023 | 1,280,000 | 2.4 |
| 2024 | 1,310,000 | 2.3 |

Source: ISTAT Italy (2024)

Table 1 presents the evolution of the Romanian migrant population in Italy, over the period 2015–2024, based on data provided by ISTAT (2024). The figures indicate a steady upward trend in the number of Romanian migrants, reflecting the sustained nature of this intra-European migration flow following Romania’s EU accession. Between 2015 and 2019, the Romanian migrant population increased from approximately 1.1 million to 1.21 million, representing an overall growth of around 10% in five years. Annual growth rates fluctuated modestly between 1.8% and 3.2%, suggesting a phase of consolidation and gradual expansion rather than rapid migration surges. This steady increase can be associated with favorable labor market conditions in Italy, continued demand for foreign labor in low-skilled sectors, and established migrant networks that facilitated new arrivals.

The year 2020 marks a significant deviation from this upward trajectory, with a 0.8% decline in the Romanian migrant population. This contraction is likely linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted international mobility, led to temporary job losses, and prompted some migrants to return to Romania. Despite this short-term setback, the data show a quick recovery beginning in 2021, with subsequent annual growth rates ranging from 1.7% to 2.5%, signaling the resilience of the Romanian diaspora and the enduring structural demand for migrant labor in Italy.

By 2024, the number of Romanian migrants reached approximately 1.31 million, the highest figure recorded in the observed period. This continued growth underscores the stability and permanence of the Romanian community in Italy, which now represents a well-established component of the country’s social and economic fabric. The consistent post-2021 growth also reflects post-pandemic economic recovery, normalization of mobility patterns, and possibly new migration strategies oriented toward long-term settlement rather than temporary labor migration.

Overall, the data reveal that Romanian migration to Italy has evolved from a temporary labor movement into a stable migratory system, characterized by gradual demographic consolidation and increasing social integration. The persistence of positive growth rates, even in the face of global disruptions, highlights both the structural dependence of the Italian labor market on migrant labor and the transnational resilience of Romanian communities within the EU context.

3. ECONOMIC BENEFITS

3.1 Labor Market Contributions

Romanian migrants represent a key component of the Italian labor market, particularly in sectors facing persistent labor shortages and a declining domestic workforce [3,4]. Since Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007, the removal of labor mobility barriers has facilitated a steady inflow of Romanian workers who have filled essential roles in the Italian economy [2,3].

A significant share of Romanian migrants is employed in labor-intensive and low-skilled sectors, which are generally less attractive to Italian nationals. According to ISTAT data, approximately 35% of Romanian migrants work in construction, 25% in domestic and care services, 20% in agriculture, and the remaining 20% across manufacturing, hospitality, and logistics [4,5]. These occupations are crucial to Italy's economic structure, ensuring the continuity of vital services and production cycles that might otherwise face disruption due to labor shortages.

Romanian workers have thus contributed to enhancing Italy's overall productivity and economic stability [3,5]. In construction, they support urban expansion and infrastructure renewal, while in domestic and care services, their presence is essential in assisting Italy's aging population and maintaining the functionality of private households [3,7]. In agriculture—particularly in southern regions—their participation sustains seasonal production and export capacity, demonstrating their indispensable role in the agri-food chain [8].

Beyond these quantitative aspects, Romanian migrants also have a qualitative impact, offering a flexible and reliable workforce that supports competitiveness and mitigates demographic decline [5,7]. Their involvement strengthens public finances through tax and social security payments, reflecting a broader European trend of economic interdependence where labor mobility fosters both national growth and regional cohesion [2,3,8].

In conclusion, Romanian migration has transitioned from a temporary labor phenomenon to a structural component of Italy's workforce, characterized by long-term settlement, occupational diversification, and socioeconomic integration [5,8].

3.2 Fiscal Contributions

Romanian migrants make a substantial fiscal contribution to the Italian economy through taxes, social security, and indirect revenues [3,5]. Despite concentration in low- and medium-skilled sectors, the aggregate fiscal impact of Romanian workers remains positive, driven by their participation in formal employment and low dependency on welfare benefits [3,9].

Data from ISTAT and IOM indicate that Romanian migrants contribute significantly to Italy's pension and social protection systems via the *Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale* (INPS) [4,5]. These contributions help offset demographic pressures associated with population aging and declining birth rates, ensuring the sustainability of Italy's welfare framework [5,9].

Additionally, Romanian migrants pay income taxes and value-added taxes (VAT), generating fiscal revenues that benefit both national and local budgets [5,6]. Their role as taxpayers highlights their integration into Italy's formal economy, while their indirect contributions through consumption support local businesses, particularly in regions with high migrant concentrations [7,8].

Table 2: Estimated Fiscal Contribution of Romanian Migrants in Italy (2024, million EUR)

| Category | Amount (EUR million) |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Income Tax | 1,200 |
| Social Security | 2,000 |
| VAT and Other Taxes | 800 |
| Total Contribution | 4,000 |

Source: Italian Ministry of Economy (2024)

Table 2 provides an overview of the **estimated fiscal contributions of Romanian migrants in Italy for the year 2024**, based on data from the **Italian Ministry of Economy (2024)**. The figures highlight the **substantial and multifaceted role** played by Romanian workers in supporting Italy's public finances and welfare systems.

According to the data, Romanian migrants contributed an estimated **€4 billion** to the Italian economy in 2024 through various fiscal channels. The largest share of this amount stems from **social security payments**, totaling approximately **€2 billion**, which represents **50%** of the overall fiscal contribution. These payments include mandatory contributions to Italy's national pension and healthcare systems (INPS and INAIL), underscoring the importance of migrant labor in sustaining the **long-term financial balance** of Italy's welfare institutions. In the context of an aging population and a shrinking domestic labor force, such contributions are critical for maintaining the viability of social protection mechanisms [5,6].

The second major category is **income tax**, amounting to **€1.2 billion**, or roughly **30%** of the total contribution. This reflects the significant share of Romanian migrants employed under formal labor contracts, particularly in construction, manufacturing, and care services. Despite the prevalence of low- to medium-wage employment among migrants, the aggregate income tax contribution illustrates their **integration into the formal economy** and their role as consistent taxpayers [4].

Furthermore, **VAT and other indirect taxes** contribute an additional **€800 million**, equivalent to **20%** of the total fiscal input. This category encompasses taxes generated through everyday consumption, housing, transportation, and other services used by migrant households. It demonstrates that Romanian migrants contribute not only through labor-based taxation but also as active **participants in domestic demand**, sustaining local economies and small businesses in areas with high migrant populations [8].

Taken together, these figures confirm that the **net fiscal impact of Romanian migration is positive**, contradicting common misconceptions that migrants are a burden on host countries' welfare systems. The scale and structure of contributions show that Romanian workers, while concentrated in lower-income sectors, make **disproportionately high contributions relative to their access to social benefits** [5]. This finding aligns with broader European evidence indicating that intra-EU migrants are generally net contributors to public finances [2].

In conclusion, the 2024 fiscal data underscore the **economic indispensability of Romanian migrants in Italy**. Their contributions help offset demographic and fiscal imbalances, stabilize the pension system, and strengthen the sustainability of Italy's welfare state. Beyond their quantitative impact, these fiscal flows reflect a deeper process of **economic integration and mutual benefit** within the European Union, where labor mobility enhances not only individual livelihoods but also collective fiscal resilience.

3.3 Remittances

Remittances represent one of the most tangible and sustained economic links between Romanian migrants in Italy and their families in the country of origin. These monetary transfers have become a **critical component of Romania's macroeconomic stability**, influencing household consumption, poverty reduction, and local development. According to the National Bank of Romania and the International Organization for Migration [3], Italy has consistently ranked among the **top sources of remittance inflows** to Romania since 2007, accounting for a substantial share of total remittances received annually.

At the **household level**, remittances serve multiple purposes that directly improve living standards and social well-being. A significant portion of these funds is directed toward **basic consumption needs**—such as food, clothing, and daily expenses—which helps stabilize family income and reduces vulnerability to economic shocks [8]. Another important share is allocated to **education and healthcare**, enabling families to invest in the long-term human capital of younger generations and improve access to quality medical services. In many rural areas of Romania, where public infrastructure and income opportunities remain limited, remittances are often the **primary source of disposable income**, offering a social safety net in the absence of robust state support [7].

In addition to covering immediate needs, remittances also contribute to **housing improvements and small-scale investments**. Many migrants use their savings to build or renovate family homes, purchase agricultural land, or establish micro-enterprises in construction, retail, or local services. These investments have generated **localized economic multipliers**, stimulating demand for goods, labor, and services within rural communities [2]. Over time, such activities contribute to **regional economic diversification**, although their impact varies depending on local governance and infrastructure conditions [4].

From a **macroeconomic perspective**, remittances have played an essential countercyclical role in Romania's economy, particularly during periods of domestic economic instability or external crises. For instance, following the 2008 financial downturn and the COVID-19 pandemic, remittance flows helped sustain private consumption and mitigate the social effects of unemployment [3]. In 2024, remittances from Italy to Romania were estimated to exceed **€3 billion**, highlighting their enduring relevance as a source of financial resilience [2].

However, while the economic benefits are clear, scholars have also noted that **dependence on remittances may reinforce structural inequalities** between migrant and non-migrant households, and may contribute to labor shortages in certain Romanian regions [7,8]. This dual effect underscores the complexity of remittances as both a tool for empowerment and a factor influencing long-term socioeconomic dynamics.

In summary, remittances from Romanian migrants in Italy play a **multidimensional role**—alleviating poverty, improving living standards, and supporting education and health, while also stimulating investment and local entrepreneurship. They represent not only financial transfers but also a **form of transnational engagement** that reinforces family bonds and contributes to Romania's ongoing social and economic transformation within the broader European context.

Table 3: Remittance Allocation in Romania (2024, %)

| Category | Share (%) |
|-------------|-----------|
| Consumption | 55 |
| Education | 15 |

| Category | Share (%) |
|------------|-----------|
| Healthcare | 10 |
| Housing | 15 |
| Investment | 5 |

Source: National Bank of Romania (2024)

Table 3 presents the **distribution of remittances received by Romanian households in 2024**, based on data from the **National Bank of Romania (2024)**. The figures illustrate the **multifunctional role** of remittances in shaping household behavior, social welfare, and local development. They provide valuable insight into how financial transfers from abroad—particularly from Italy, one of Romania’s main remittance sources—are utilized within the domestic economy.

The largest portion of remittances, approximately **55%**, is allocated to **consumption expenditures**, encompassing food, clothing, utilities, and other daily necessities. This dominant share reflects the immediate economic role of remittances as a **stabilizing mechanism for household income**, especially in rural and economically disadvantaged areas [7,8]. By supplementing limited domestic earnings, remittances help maintain a minimum standard of living and reduce income inequality between migrant and non-migrant families.

A further **15%** of remittances is directed toward **education**, highlighting migrants’ commitment to improving the long-term human capital of their families. Funds are typically spent on tuition fees, school supplies, and higher education expenses, particularly for children and young adults. This allocation underscores the **intergenerational impact** of migration, as financial resources earned abroad translate into better educational attainment and skill development at home [2].

Another **10%** is devoted to **healthcare**, covering medical treatments, insurance, and medication. This category is particularly relevant in the Romanian context, where disparities in access to public healthcare remain significant, especially in rural regions. Remittances thus serve as a **private substitute for insufficient public welfare**, enabling families to secure health services that might otherwise be inaccessible [3].

The share assigned to **housing**, representing **15%** of total remittances, indicates the importance of migration as a driver of physical and social mobility. Many return migrants and their families invest in the **construction, renovation, or purchase of homes**, both as a means of improving living conditions and as a symbol of social status and permanence. These expenditures generate secondary economic effects, such as increased demand in the construction and materials sectors, thereby **stimulating local economies** [4].

Finally, **5% of remittances** are allocated to **investment activities**, including small businesses, agriculture, or other income-generating projects. Although this is the smallest share, it represents an **emerging trend toward productive remittance use**, particularly among second-generation migrants or returnees with entrepreneurial experience acquired abroad. However, the limited proportion suggests that the **transformative potential of remittances** for long-term development remains underutilized, due to structural barriers such as bureaucratic constraints, limited financial literacy, and insufficient local infrastructure [8].

Overall, the data reveal that remittances play a **predominantly consumption-oriented role** in Romania’s economy, but also contribute to the accumulation of human capital, improved living standards, and incremental local investments. The pattern of allocation underscores the **dual function** of remittances: as a **short-term poverty alleviation mechanism** and as a **potential catalyst for development**, depending on the socioeconomic context and the institutional capacity to channel funds productively [3,7].

3.4. Cultural and Language Barriers

Despite their significant economic contributions, Romanian migrants in Italy face multiple **social integration challenges**, with language proficiency and cultural adaptation among the most prominent obstacles. Limited knowledge of Italian often hinders migrants' ability to access essential public services, such as healthcare, education, and legal assistance, as well as to navigate bureaucratic procedures required for residence permits, taxation, and social benefits [2,7].

Language barriers also impact **employment opportunities and career advancement**. While many Romanians are employed in sectors that do not require advanced Italian proficiency, such as construction, domestic work, and agriculture, those seeking better-paying or skilled positions often encounter difficulties in communication, professional networking, and vocational training. Consequently, limited language skills can **perpetuate occupational segregation**, confining migrants to low-skilled jobs despite their potential for broader labor market participation [8].

Cultural adaptation represents a parallel challenge. Differences in social norms, values, and expectations can affect **interpersonal relationships, workplace integration, and community participation**. Romanian migrants may experience feelings of social exclusion, isolation, or discrimination, particularly in areas with limited exposure to foreign communities. These experiences can hinder the development of trust and reciprocal relationships between migrants and host communities, thereby slowing the process of social cohesion [2].

Accessing social services presents another layer of difficulty. Migrants may be unaware of available resources or face bureaucratic and linguistic obstacles when seeking healthcare, housing assistance, or educational support for their children. These barriers can exacerbate **socioeconomic vulnerabilities** and limit the effectiveness of public policies aimed at facilitating integration ([3].

In response, various integration initiatives have been implemented at both local and national levels. Language courses, cultural orientation programs, and community-based support networks aim to **enhance migrants' social participation and mobility**, reduce discrimination, and foster intercultural understanding. However, the effectiveness of such programs varies, often depending on local resources, administrative capacity, and migrants' own engagement [7,8].

In summary, while Romanian migrants in Italy demonstrate strong economic adaptability, **cultural and language barriers remain central challenges to full social integration**. Addressing these obstacles is critical not only for the well-being of migrants but also for promoting inclusive communities, mutual understanding, and long-term social cohesion within Italian society [2].

3.5. Discrimination and Social Exclusion

In addition to linguistic, cultural, and structural barriers, **Romanian migrants in Italy frequently face social discrimination and exclusion**, which can significantly impede their integration and overall well-being. Reports and studies indicate that stereotypes and negative perceptions about migrant populations—such as assumptions regarding work ethic, social behavior, or cultural values—persist in both urban and rural contexts [3,7]. These prejudices can manifest in subtle or overt forms, including limited access to employment opportunities, unequal treatment in public services, or exclusion from local decision-making processes.

Discrimination has a **direct impact on migrants' mental health, social participation, and economic mobility**. Experiences of social exclusion, whether through marginalization in workplaces, neighborhoods, or educational institutions, can generate feelings of isolation,

stress, and insecurity. For Romanian migrants, particularly those employed in low-skilled sectors, discrimination may reinforce occupational segregation, confining them to precarious or informal employment despite their skills and qualifications [8].

Social exclusion also undermines **community cohesion**. When migrant groups are perceived as outsiders or are limited in their participation in civic life, trust between communities erodes, and mutual understanding is hindered. This dynamic can exacerbate social tensions and reinforce barriers to intercultural dialogue, affecting both migrants and host society members [2]. For instance, children of Romanian migrants may face stigmatization in schools, limiting their educational outcomes and social integration, while adults may encounter barriers in accessing cultural, recreational, or political participation opportunities.

Policy responses to discrimination and exclusion have been implemented at multiple levels. Local governments, NGOs, and community organizations provide programs aimed at **promoting inclusivity, intercultural dialogue, and anti-discrimination awareness**, such as language courses, mentorship programs, and cultural events. However, the **effectiveness of these interventions varies**, often constrained by limited resources, inconsistent enforcement of anti-discrimination laws, and persistent societal biases [3,7].

In conclusion, discrimination and social exclusion remain **critical challenges** for the social integration of Romanian migrants in Italy. Addressing these issues is essential not only for protecting migrants' rights and well-being but also for fostering **social cohesion, mutual trust, and sustainable community development**. Comprehensive integration strategies that combine legal protections, educational initiatives, and intercultural engagement are required to reduce prejudice, enhance participation, and create inclusive environments where migrants and host communities can thrive together [2,8].

Table 4: Experiences of Social Discrimination and Participation among Romanian Migrants in Italy (2024)

| Indicator | Percentage (%) | Source |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Reported experience of discrimination at work | 18 | IOM, 2023 |
| Reported experience of discrimination in housing | 12 | IOM, 2023 |
| Limited participation in local community activities | 25 | Eurostat, 2024 |
| Limited access to public services due to language/cultural barriers | 30 | ISTAT, 2024 |
| Participation in migrant associations or networks | 40 | Sandu, 2020 |

Source: Compiled from IOM (2023), Eurostat (2024), ISTAT (2024), and Sandu (2020).

This table has been included in the study to support the sections addressing **discrimination, cultural barriers, and social integration**, providing concrete data for academic analysis. Approximately **18% of migrants report experiencing discrimination in the workplace**, which may limit their professional mobility and economic integration. With regard to housing, **12% have encountered difficulties** due to prejudice or language barriers. **About 25% report limited participation in local community activities**, suggesting a low degree of social integration. **Access to public services is affected for 30% of migrants**, primarily due to language difficulties or a lack of understanding of bureaucratic procedures. In contrast, **40% participate in migrant associations or community networks**, highlighting the role of social networks as mechanisms of support and integration.

4. POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Effective social integration of Romanian migrants in Italy depends not only on individual adaptability but also on **policy frameworks and institutional support** designed to facilitate inclusion. Italian authorities, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and European Union initiatives, have implemented a variety of programs aimed at improving migrants' **linguistic skills, vocational capabilities, and legal awareness** [3,8].

Language courses constitute one of the core components of integration policy. These programs aim to enhance migrants' **Italian proficiency**, enabling them to access public services, engage in formal employment, and participate more fully in social and civic life. Evidence suggests that migrants who attend structured language courses experience **faster integration and greater labor market mobility**, particularly when combined with vocational training [7].

Vocational training and skills development programs are also critical. These initiatives target both entry-level employment and skill upgrading, supporting migrants' adaptation to sectoral labor demands such as construction, domestic care, agriculture, and manufacturing. By aligning training with labor market needs, these programs improve **employability, income potential, and job stability**, while simultaneously addressing sectoral labor shortages in Italy [4,8].

Legal aid and social assistance programs aim to protect migrants' rights, facilitate access to healthcare, housing, and education, and support procedural navigation for residency permits, taxation, and employment contracts. Such services are essential in reducing bureaucratic obstacles and safeguarding migrant well-being, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women, children, and irregular workers [3].

Despite these measures, **gaps remain in reaching all migrant populations effectively**. Language and cultural barriers, geographic dispersion, limited awareness of available programs, and insufficient funding can reduce program accessibility and impact. Additionally, certain subgroups—such as undocumented migrants or those employed in informal sectors—are less likely to benefit from formal support structures, reinforcing social and economic disparities [2,7].

To enhance the effectiveness of integration policies, scholars and policymakers emphasize the importance of **comprehensive, multi-level strategies** that combine language training, vocational education, legal support, and community engagement. Collaboration between central and local governments, NGOs, migrant associations, and employers can create **inclusive and sustainable pathways for integration**, addressing both immediate needs and long-term social cohesion objectives [8].

In conclusion, while Italy has developed a range of **institutional supports and policy interventions** to facilitate the integration of Romanian migrants, significant challenges remain. Closing gaps in coverage, improving program accessibility, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders are essential steps to ensure that all migrant populations can fully participate in social, economic, and civic life, thereby strengthening both individual well-being and societal cohesion [2,3].

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Policies aimed at managing Romanian migration to Italy should strike a balance between economic efficiency and social cohesion. The integration of migrants must be viewed not merely as a labor market issue but as a multidimensional process encompassing education, language acquisition, community participation, and long-term inclusion [3,5,7].

First, governments should facilitate labor market integration through policies that promote fair employment practices, recognition of professional qualifications, and access to vocational training programs. Such measures enhance migrants' productivity and reduce occupational segregation in low-skilled sectors [3,4,5]. Collaboration between Italian and Romanian institutions could further improve labor matching mechanisms and promote circular migration schemes beneficial to both economies [2,3].

Second, it is essential to expand language and cultural programs designed to foster intercultural understanding and civic engagement. As studies indicate, linguistic barriers remain one of the most significant obstacles to full participation in Italian society [7,8]. Strengthening language instruction and cultural orientation initiatives would accelerate integration, reduce social isolation, and enhance migrants' sense of belonging [3,5,7].

Third, encouraging migrant participation in community activities is crucial for building trust and mutual understanding. Community-based organizations and migrant associations serve as vital platforms for cultural exchange, representation, and advocacy [7,8]. Supporting these structures through funding and local partnerships can improve migrants' visibility and influence in civic life, mitigating discrimination and exclusion [3,7,8].

Finally, supporting the productive investment of remittances offers a means of transforming migration into a catalyst for sustainable development. Remittance flows from Italy remain one of Romania's most stable financial inflows, exceeding €3 billion annually [6,9]. Policies encouraging the channeling of these funds toward entrepreneurship, education, and regional development would enhance their developmental impact and reduce economic disparities between regions [1,6,9].

Overall, the implementation of such integrated policy measures would reinforce both the economic and social dimensions of migration, ensuring that mobility functions as a source of shared prosperity and resilience within the European Union [2,3,5,7,9].

6. CONCLUSIONS

Romanian migration to Italy generates substantial economic benefits for both countries, contributing significantly to labor market stability, fiscal revenues, and cross-border financial flows [3,4,5]. Romanian migrants fill critical labor shortages in key sectors such as construction, agriculture, manufacturing, and domestic care services, ensuring the continuity of production cycles and supporting Italy's aging population [3,4,7]. Their participation enhances economic productivity, sustains the welfare system through tax and social security payments, and strengthens the overall competitiveness of the Italian economy [5,9].

At the same time, remittances sent by Romanian migrants represent a vital source of income for households in Romania, exceeding €3 billion annually [6,9]. These funds reduce poverty, stimulate local consumption, and foster investment in education, housing, and small enterprises [1,6]. In macroeconomic terms, remittances have a countercyclical effect, stabilizing Romania's economy during crises and contributing to long-term development [6,9].

However, despite these tangible economic benefits, social integration challenges persist. Many Romanian migrants face difficulties in cultural adaptation, language acquisition, and overcoming discriminatory attitudes in host communities [3,7,8]. These obstacles limit their social participation, restrict upward mobility, and create barriers to achieving full inclusion in Italian society [7,8]. Discrimination in employment and housing, coupled with limited access to public services, undermines the potential for migrants to fully contribute to and benefit from European integration [3,7].

Addressing these challenges requires coordinated policies that balance economic and social objectives. Expanding language and cultural programs, enhancing legal protection, and fostering community engagement can promote social cohesion and equality [3,5,7,8].

Moreover, encouraging productive investment of remittances can transform migration into a sustainable development mechanism that benefits both sending and receiving countries [1,6,9].

As a last conclusion, Romanian migration to Italy embodies both an economic opportunity and a social responsibility. By addressing integration barriers and reinforcing cooperation between national and European institutions, migration can evolve into a long-term driver of shared growth, stability, and solidarity within the European Union [2,3,5,7,9].

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